

BOOK REVIEW

KENDALL R. LAMKEY and MICHAEL LEE. (Eds.). 2006. **Plant Breeding: The Arnel R. Hallauer International Symposium.** (ISBN 0-8138-2824-4, 978-0-8138-2824-4, hbk.). Blackwell Publishing, 2121 State Ave., Ames, IA 50014-8300, U.S.A. and 9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK. (**Orders:** 515-292-0140, 515-292-3348 fax 1-800-862-6657, www.blackwellprofessional.com, orders@ames.blackwellpublishing.com), \$149.99, 379 pp., numerous illustrations, 7" × 10".

A total of 84 authors contribute a collection of 27 chapters, the first "Plant Breeding: Past, Present, and Future." From the Preface: "The world of plant breeding has experienced dramatic changes during the [last 45 years]. At the institutional level, international centers of crop development have emerged and declined, legal and ethical issues have become routine considerations, the private sector (national programs, federal governments, universities) has diversified and placed greater emphasis on basic research as opposed to varietal development. Changes in infrastructure (e.g., off-season nurseries, service laboratories) and technology (e.g., computers, machinery, analytical methods, transgenic methods) enable the declining number of plant breeders to evaluate more germplasm in more ways in more environments and to identify genotypes that exhibit optimal adaptation to the needs of society, the demands of nature, and the desires of the market. Nascent developments in basic biological and informational sciences, as exemplified by the gradual annotation of entire genomes and their gene products, have provided additional tools and options for various aspects of plant breeding."—Guy Nesom, *Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 509 Pecan Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102-4068, U.S.A.*

BOOK NOTICE

M. NEVIN SMITH. 2006. **Native Treasures: Gardening with the Plants of California.** (ISBN 0-520-24425-7, pbk.). University of California Press, California/Princeton Fulfillment Services, 1445 Lower Ferry Road, Ewing, NJ 08618, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.ucpress.edu/, 609-883-1759, 609-883-7413 fax). \$24.95, 278 pp., color photos, 7" × 10".

From the author.—"This is not a 'how-to' gardening book, though practical subjects are addressed here in detail, and it is certainly not the comprehensive encyclopedia ... Rather, it combines my own personal thoughts, sometimes maverick opinions, and experience with a goodly measure of plainer facts on selected groups of native plants and their culture. The plant genera described here include most of the major ones in cultivation, but also some more obscure but garden-worthy groups, thrown in as whim and personal interests dictate." Smith divides his favorites into "trees" (oaks, madroño), "shrubs" (e.g., wild lilac, manzanitas, flannel bushes, giant poppies), "two broader genera" (sage and buckwheat), "subshrubs and herbaceous perennials" (e.g., penstemons, iris, lewisias, blue eyes, golden eyes), and "bulbs and corms" (lilies, brodiaeas and friends). He ends with "Small Matters—The trouble with annuals": "We forget that Nature's best displays are occasional and unpredictable. We tell ourselves that anything seen over such vast areas [floors of annual wildflowers] *must* be easy to grow. And so they are, in a well tended flower pot. Creating a reliable display in the open garden is more difficult—as I have learned through harsh experience."

The book is implicitly, at least, aimed toward California gardeners, but surely many of the species could be grown elsewhere in North America. "California gardeners, like their counterparts the world over, can be woefully ignorant of the flora close at hand. They are influenced by a long and hallowed tradition of importing horticultural treasures from Europe, Asia, and other far-flung regions." But ... "A fair number of native plants are now used interchangeably with exotics of similar features even by gardeners whose notion of geographic origin in the local nursery." Even for non-gardeners, this is a great book with lots of interesting biology, fun to read, even if you're not from California.—Guy Nesom, *Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 509 Pecan Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102-4068, U.S.A.*